

# School Garden Planning Guide



## Build a Team and Plan a Garden

**1. Describe why you want to build a school garden, what are your values and goals?**

**2. Do you have support from the administration and custodians?**

Yes    No

**3. List any teachers, staff, or school community members who may be interested in helping.**

**Hint:** Are there garden clubs, senior centers, master gardeners, or high school groups who might be willing to work with students in the garden?

**4. What grade levels or classes will be involved in the garden and will they require their own garden space?**

## Build a Team and Plan

**5. How do you plan to use the garden as an instructional tool and what topics do you want to teach through the garden?**

**6. How often would you utilize the garden – weekly, monthly, seasonally etc.?**

Weekly     Monthly     Seasonally     Special occasions     Summer

**7. Make a list of people who can help with writing grants, acquiring donations, fund-raising and help build a team of volunteers?**

## Communication

**1. Make a list of people who will help contact groups, organizations or companies to help publicize the school garden.**

**Hint:** Consider the School district, school web site, newsletter, calendar, local government, businesses, newspaper, community groups, and social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

## Plan and Design

**1. Make a list of materials tools and supplies will you need.**

**Hint:** Are there local farmers or gardeners who might help prepare the site (e.g., provide plowing, manure, or lime)? Is there a local nursery or business that might be willing to “adopt” your program and/or donate gardening tools and supplies, materials for building raised beds, and so on?

# Location and Site Analysis

**1. Do you have any open, unused space that could be used for a garden?**

Yes  No

**2. Does it have full sunlight for at least six hours a day?**

Yes  No

**3. Is it reasonably level?**

Yes  No

**4. Does it have access to water?**

Yes  No

**5. Is it well drained?**

Yes  No

**6. How healthy is the soil?**

Bad  Good  Great

**7. Will you need to test the soil?**

Yes  No

**8. Do you have at least 6 to 12 inches of topsoil?**

Yes  No

**9. What needs to be done to prepare or enhance the soil?**

## Location and Site Analysis

**10. Should you consider raised beds, containers, or SIPs (Sub-irrigated planters) such as an EarthBoxes?**

Yes  No

**11. Will you need to remove asphalt, concrete, fence or grass or install a fence?**

**Hint:** Consider these factors in your budget, schedule and timeline.

Yes  No

**12. Will you require and have space for a rain barrel, if so, how many?**

Yes  No #\_\_\_\_\_ Rain barrels

**13. Will you compost or vermicompost? Is there space allocated for this?**

Yes  No

**14. Will you have space for a tool shed or something to store tools?**

Yes  No

**15. Will the garden be it safe, secure, easily accessible, visible and protected from vandalism?**

Yes  No

# Garden Design

## 1. What type of garden do you want to build?

In-ground     Raised bed     Container     EarthBox type     Vertical garden

## 2. Do you want a central garden theme or will you create small garden areas with multiple themes?

**Hint:** Garden theme such as vegetable, fruit, herb, butterfly, art, ethnic, sensory etc.

## 3. List some seeds and plants you are interested in growing.

**Hint:** Lettuce, tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers and herbs are easy to grow and provide generous yields.

## 4. Will it be organic vs. inorganic?

Organic     Inorganic

## 5. Will it be sustainable?

Yes     No

## 6. Do you have plans for a ribbon cutting, harvest festival, garden party or celebration?

# Build, Manage and Sustain

## 1. List people, groups or organizations who will help build the garden.

**Hint:** Consider teachers, students, families, volunteers, community gardens, clubs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, professional contractors etc.

## 2. Make a list of gardeners, volunteer and custodians and assign weekly and monthly chores to weed, water, maintain compost, fertilize and harvest.

**Hint:** It's helpful to appoint a coordinator for this task.

## 3. What tools and materials will you need to build the garden?

**Hint:** Also include plants, seeds, plant markers, first aid and water

## Build, Manage and Sustain

### **4. Who could help with maintenance of the garden during the summer?**

**Hint:** Consider having families adopt parts of the garden or share the space with neighbors or a community garden.

### **5. What are the needs and budget for the garden next year? The following years?**

**Hint:** The cost of a 4" X 8" garden bed averages \$100 including plant.

### **6. What lessons did you learn in building, maintaining and sustaining a school garden?**



# Education and Program

## 1. How do you want to incorporate the garden with the school?

**Hint:** Consider curriculum lessons, nutrition classes, tastings from the garden, cooking classes, harvest meals and celebrations, incorporate produce from the garden into school lunches, extra-curricular activities and community outreach such as food donations, entrepreneurial activities, etc.



## Garden Budget Worksheet

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### Size of School Garden:

# \_\_\_\_\_ of Square feet

### Participants:

# \_\_\_\_\_ Teachers      # \_\_\_\_\_ Students      # \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteers

### Building the Garden:

#### Garden Materials

(Containers, plants, soil, seeds, mulch, fertilizer etc.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Garden Tools

(Hand trowels, shovels, watering cans, buckets, watering wands, rakes, hoses, spade, hoe etc.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Educational Materials

(Books, journals, curriculum etc.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contracted Labor & Construction

(May include removal of trees, fence, asphalt, concrete, grass etc. or installation of new fence)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Garden Based Professional Development

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

##### Instructional garden coordinator \$60/hr-

Develops and leads garden based education activities, provides resources and supplies

##### Garden Consultant \$60/hr

Helps develop garden building plan and coordinates purchase of supplies

##### Garden Assistant \$25/hr

Assists teachers with their garden activities

**Note:** The cost of a 4' X 8' cedar raised garden bed including soil, compost and plants is approximately \$100.

Sources: (1) Debbie Kong School Garden Educator (2) Starting a School Garden by Eve Pranis at National Gardening Association, (3) Gardens for Learning: Creating and Sustaining Your School Garden by California School Garden Network